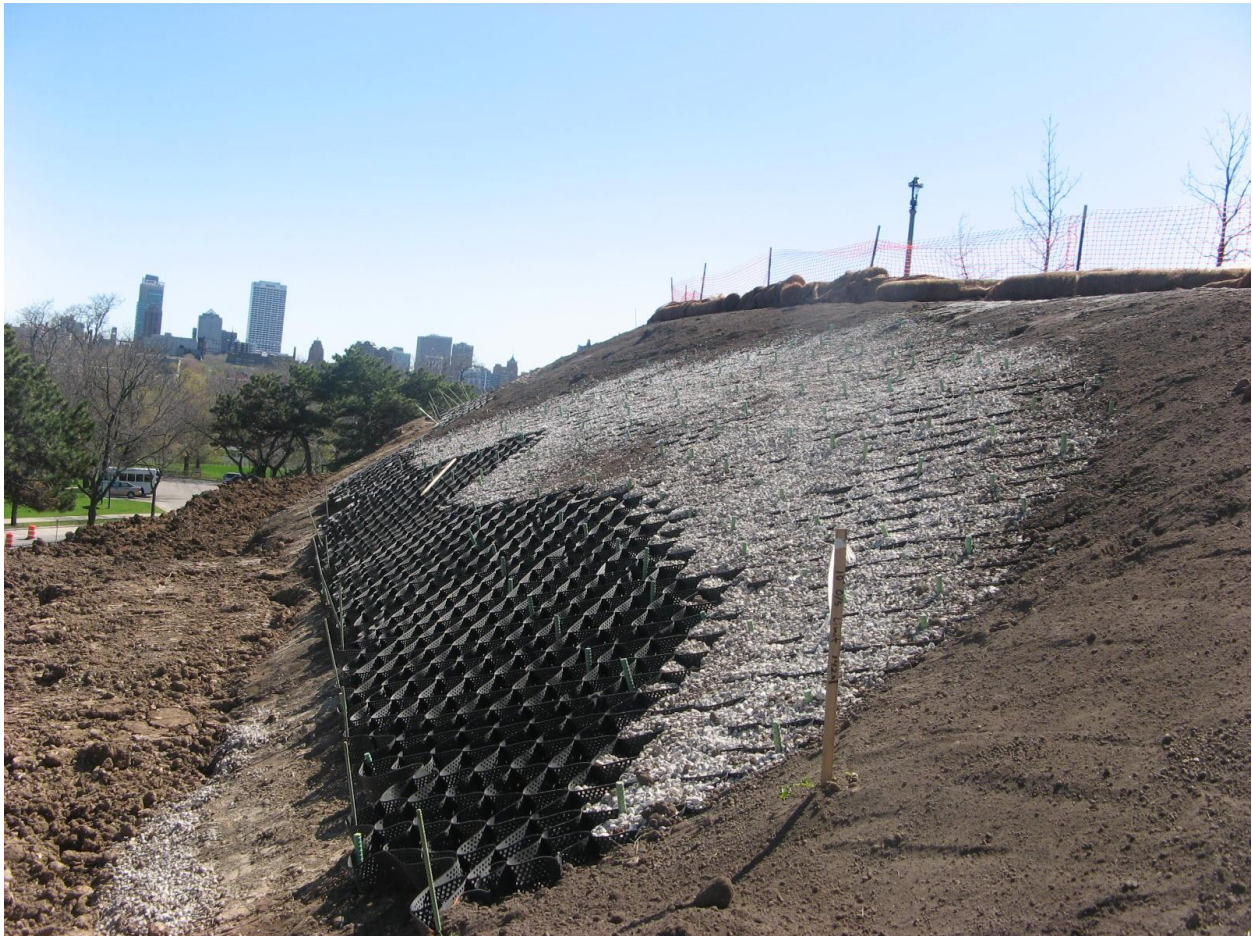


## **The American Legion Star Emblem Presentation at Kilbourn Reservoir Park**

The Milwaukee Water Works is directing the re-creation of the American Legion Star Emblem on the east hill of Kilbourn Reservoir Park. The hill once covered a water reservoir in the park at 626 E. North Ave.

Through a Request for Proposal process, the Water Works and a citizens' committee selected Bella Landscaping to re-create the emblem presentation in as close to the same scale and color as a previous presentation made of annual flowers at the original location in the park. The new emblem presentation consists of colored, tumbled recycled glass pieces, covered with a hard glaze, in the original iron frame of the floral arrangement. The project received approval of the Historic Preservation Commission and the Milwaukee Arts Board.



The iron frame is being placed in the ground April 27, 2010





Filling the anchored frame with stone April 30, 2010



May 3, 2010





View from North Avenue July 21, 2010

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Aerial view of slope reinforcement and emblem May 18, 2010



July 21, 2010





Aug. 16, 2010



Aug. 19, 2010





At sunrise Aug. 23, 2010





Aug. 23, 2010



Aug. 24, 2010





American Legion Ceremony to sign the Milwaukee Community Covenant Aug. 26, 2010. At the event, American Legion Peter Wollner Post 328 Department Commander Robert S. Batty dedicated the American Legion Emblem.





## History of the American Legion Star Emblem at the Park

From at least as early as 1931, a representation of the emblem was presented on the eastern slope of what was the Kilbourn Water Reservoir. The 49'7" diameter emblem was formed from segments of an iron template embedded in the hillside. The template was filled with some 6,000 live flowering annual plants, but this was discontinued in the 1990s due to the high cost of maintenance. For the purpose of re-creating the emblem in its original color scheme, the names and number of plants used in the display starting in 1941 are listed here:

Alyssum – Little Gem	300
Coleus – Golden bedded	1000
Achyranthus – Wallisii red	500
Ageratum – Riverside	2000
Alternantheris – yellow	2000
Alternantheris – red (brilliantissima)	600
Grass	n/a



“An American Legion emblem fashioned from 50,000 flowers ornaments the park-like slope of a city waterworks reservoir in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This air photograph was submitted by Joseph Bolda, Commander of the General William G. Haan Post.” For his photograph, Bolda won first prize for August in the Monthly’s Prize Photograph Contest.

--*American Legion Monthly* magazine, August 1932





“State Legionnaires Meet Here Again: Founded in Milwaukee, the Wisconsin American Legion is holding its state convention here for the first time this week. The convention, the nineteenth annual meeting, is attracting visitors from all parts of the middle west. The legion emblem on the west back of the reservoir on E. North av. serves as a symbol of welcome. Executives and convention officials are grouped at the top in this picture, while below is the state champion junior drum corps from Alonzo Cudworth Memorial post. The floral emblem is maintained by the city water works department.” Caption with *Milwaukee Journal Roto Section* photo; Sun., Aug. 8, 1937.

In 1940, Milwaukee Mayor Carl Zeidler, (1940-1942), recruited the American Legion to hold its 1941 national convention in Milwaukee. Delegates admired the American Legion Star in its floral arrangement on the Water Works’ Kilbourn Park Reservoir, according to records of the Wisconsin Historical Society.